

FirstNet finance committee puts money behind program roadmap

Urgent Communications By Donny Jackson

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[FirstNet](#) 's finance committee unanimously approved a resolution to establish new guidelines allocating \$72.1 million for expenditures designed to implement the program roadmap, without increasing the organization's overall budget for the current fiscal year, according to FirstNet officials.

"Today, we are funding the essential steps for the rest of this fiscal year to move forward on our program roadmap and business planning for building a nationwide, interoperable, public safety communications network," FirstNet Chairman and finance-committee member Sam Ginn said in a prepared statement. "The resolution sets in motion the resources needed to implement the milestones and priorities that the board adopted at the March meeting, while also taking a careful and focused approach to our operations going forward."

With the resolution approved last Thursday, FirstNet management may commit financial resources in the following dollar amounts to four key activity categories:

- \$6.9 million for business strategy development, which includes initiating public-notice and public-comment processes;
- \$33.0 million for network development, including the establishment of requirements and procedures regarding requests for proposal (RFPs) associated with network equipment and services;
- \$16.1 million for outreach and state consultation; and
- \$16.1 million for operating-infrastructure development, which includes the hiring of permanent and contract staff, as well as paying for facilities.

In addition, the resolution allows FirstNet management the flexibility to reallocate as much as 10% of the funds from one major activity category to another. A document that includes the [complete language of the finance-committee resolution and details about the major activity categories](#) can be found on the [FirstNet website](#).

“With this resolution we are designating spending on the program roadmap as the highest priority going forward,” Tim Bryan, chairman of the FirstNet finance committee, said in a prepared statement. Bryan credited the Finance Committee and FirstNet management for being judicious with taxpayer funds as they worked to develop guidelines for achieving the milestones within the board’s approved budget, according to a FirstNet press release.

In addition to Ginn and Bryan, other members of the finance committee are FirstNet board Vice Chair Sue Swenson, Ed Reynolds, Jeff Johnson, and Brian Deese.